

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION IAEA VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 051688

FOLLOWING REPEAT NEW DELHI 2774 ACTION SECSTATE 24 FEB

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 2774

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION NEW DELHI INFO CALCUTTA AND MADRAS
FROM BOMBAY FEB 24, 1976 REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO

QUOTE

BOMBAY 0451

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR TECH IN

SUBJECT: NUCLEAR TEST PLANS

1. IN BICENTENNIAL RECEPTION CONVERSATION WITH EMBASSY PO COUNSELOR
FEB 22, IAEC CHAIRMAN SETHNA SAID THAT ANALYSIS OF RESULTS OF MAY
1974 NUCLEAR TEST HAD BEEN COMPLETED SOME TIME AGO. SETHNA REPEATED
THIS EMPHATICALLY AGAIN WHEN QUERIED ABOUT IT. SETHNA SAID THERE HAD
BEEN PROBLEMS IN DECIDING WHERE TO CONDUCT NEXT TEST. INDIANS
WANTED THIS TO BE MUCH DEEPER THAN FIRST TEST, WHICH PRESENTED
"SEISMIC WAVE" PROBLEMS IN AVAILABLE UNINHABITED AREAS WHICH HAD
BEEN SURVEYED. SETHNA THOUGHT THAT PERHAPS SITE IN KUTCH AREA MIGHT
PROVE TO BE MOST APPROPRIATE BUT THIS WAS STILL UNDER EXAMINATION.

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2. SETHNA HAD "NO COMMENT" ON TIMING OF A SECOND INDIAN TEST OTHER

THAN OBSERVATIONS DESCRIBED ABOVE. WHEN ASKED WHETHER SECOND TEST WOULD BE KEYED TO SPECIFIC PRACTICAL APPLICATION FOR PEACEFUL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PURPOSES, HE HESITATED AND SAID THAT IW WOULD BE "SEMI-PRACTICAL" BUT STILL VERY MUCH IN THE EXPERIMENTAL CATEGORY.

3. COMMENT: THIS IS THE FIRST TIME ANY ATOMIC ENERGY OFFICIAL HAS SPECIFICALLY SAID THAT ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST INDIAN TEST HAD BEEN COMPLETED. UP TO THIS TIME, ALL SETHNA'S SUBORDINATES HAVE STRICTLY ADHERED TO THE "STILL UNDER STUDY" FORMULA IN CONVERSATION WITH CONSUL GENERAL. SETHNA HIMSELF, HOWEVER, HAD NOT ADDRESSED THE SUBJECT IN CONVERSATION WITH CONGEN FOR QUITE SOME TIME.
SIGNED COURTNEY UNQUOTE SAXBE UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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